



## U.S. Coast Guard Sector Northern New England

# FACT-SHEET

## Commercial Fishing Safety – Voluntary Dockside Exams

**What are they?** Voluntary Dockside Exams are examinations of commercial fishing vessels to determine and explain which federal safety regulations apply to your vessel. They are conducted pier-side or on a mooring and only at the request of the vessel owner or operator so as not to interfere with any other activity. The exams are designed to be non-confrontational and educational.

**Who should get one?** A Voluntary Dockside Examination is **free** and they are available to all commercial fishing vessels.

**Why do I need one?** Even if your vessel has been surveyed as part of your insurance company's requirements, a voluntary dockside is strongly recommended to ensure that all of your safety equipment is operational and in good working order. The additional benefit of having an exam is it gives you an opportunity to refresh your memory on current requirements and the opportunity to ask questions about making your vessel safer. At the end of the exam, you will be provided with a list of discrepancies, that if you correct, will prevent you from being fined or terminated if you are boarded at sea. Successfully resolving all discrepancies will also result in your vessel being issued a Voluntary Dockside Examination Decal which will attest to your compliance with the Federal Safety requirements and **may** reduce the amount of disruption to your fishing that an at sea boarding can cause. **Your insurance company may offer a discount for having a valid decal on your boat.**

**How do I schedule an Exam?** For Commercial Fishing Vessels that operate out of ports in Maine and New Hampshire you can schedule a Voluntary Dockside Examination by contacting Kevin Plowman at 207-780-3256 or e-mail Kevin.F.Powman@uscg.mil

**What is the Small Harbor Outreach Program?** Due to the thousands of Commercial Fishing Vessels that operate out of Maine and New Hampshire, the Marine Safety Office Portland has initiated a program to maximize the opportunity for vessel owners to get these exams.

The small harbor outreach program is an organized event during which a number of specially trained Commercial Fishing Vessel Examiners come to a port for a number of days to conduct these Voluntary Dockside Examinations. These programs can be arranged so as to enhance a community event with examiners conducting training and demonstrations on the use of safety equipment like flares, liferafts, survival suits, Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons registration and testing, etc.

To make these programs work, we need the help of fishermen, fishermen associations, fishermen organizations and community organizations, especially in scheduling the program and insuring that all fishermen in the area know about the program. If you're interest in organizing a Small Harbor Outreach Program in your community, please contact Kevin Plowman of Sector Northern New England at (207) 780-3256.



Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety	
EXAMINATION	
ISSUED	
1999 <input type="checkbox"/>	
2000 <input type="checkbox"/>	
2001 <input type="checkbox"/>	
2002 <input type="checkbox"/>	
2003 <input type="checkbox"/>	
JAN JUL	
FEB AUG	
MAR SEP	
APR OCT	
MAY NOV	
JUN DEC	

Documented  
Undocumented

LOCATION  
Inside Boundary Line  
Inside 3 NM  
Inside 12 NM  
Inside 20 NM  
Inside 50 NM  
Unlimited

THIS VESSEL MEETS  
ALL USCG COMMERCIAL  
FISHING INDUSTRY  
VESSEL REGULATIONS

NO. XXXX



U.S. Department of Transportation

**For more information please contact:**

Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety, (207) 780-3256

USCG Sector Northern New England 259 High Street South Portland, ME